

ENS [REDACTED]

Below is a summary of interview Of ENS [REDACTED], USCG, conducted by the AIM informal board on August 22, 2006 concerning the diving incident which resulted in two deaths on August 17, 2006. AIM board members present at the interview were Captain [REDACTED], LCDR [REDACTED], and LCDR [REDACTED].

ENS [REDACTED] reported aboard CGC HEALY on [REDACTED], just prior to the ship beginning TSTA in Everett, Washington. He has served as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] since reporting aboard.

ENS [REDACTED] stated that on the morning of 17 August he was asked by LT HILL to be a tender for a possible dive operation later in the day. LT HILL told ENS [REDACTED] that ice liberty was being contemplated by the command, and she had hoped to complete a dive. ENS [REDACTED] agreed.

He realized ice liberty would happen when he saw the brow being set up, and heard the liberty pipe. ENS [REDACTED] asked him to assist with setting up and handing out refreshments on the ice. The refreshments included several varieties of beer, soda and Mike's hard (alcohol) lemonade. ENS [REDACTED] stated that there was a two beer limit being passed word of mouth to the crew and that it was enforced basically by an honor system. ENS [REDACTED] stated that he consumed a beer.

BM2 DUQUE, a ship's diver, passed ENS [REDACTED] as he headed out onto the ice and told ENS [REDACTED] they wanted him in the dive locker. ENS [REDACTED] headed up to the dive locker and began to assist LT HILL getting into her dry suit. He stated that he has extensive experience with dry suits from his sailing days, and was able to assist her. He then helped LT HILL get down to the dive site on the ice.

ENS [REDACTED] stated that he understood the dive plan to be the following. All three divers would enter the water together, and conduct equipment checks. They would then descend a few feet for additional checks, then proceed to 20 feet to practice buoyancy and conduct dry suit familiarization. After 20 minutes at 20 feet, they would return to the surface. After a rest interval they would re-enter the water with the video camera and take some under-ice footage. The second dive would also be 20 feet for 20 minutes. The divers and tenders would use the following line signals: one pull for "ok," two pulls for "let out line," and four pulls for "diver coming up." There was a pull signal for three pulls that he could not recall at the interview. At the 20 minute point of each dive, the tenders were supposed to give one pull. A rapid repeating line pull was the signal for an emergency. LT HILL also elected to change the standard hand signals to better accommodate the dry suit gloves the divers were wearing. Specifically, BM2 DUQUE said he could not make a couple of the signs -- so LT HILL modified the ok sign to thumbs up and four fingers now meant going up.

The brief was completed, and all three divers entered the water. ENS [REDACTED] checked ENS [REDACTED]'s gauges before she entered the water noting that she had 3500

ENCLOSURE(70) PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGES.

(b)(6)&(7)(c)

pounds of air. He thought that was high at the time, but later learned that her steel tank was capable of higher pressure than the regular aluminum tank he was familiar with. ENS [REDACTED] and LT HILL requested mask de-fogger which ENS [REDACTED] provided and they both utilized.

There was some confusion as to whether the AGA mask straps should be worn inside or outside of the dry suit hood. BM2 DUQUE had his straps inside the hood, while LT HILL and ENS [REDACTED] had their straps on the outside. LT HILL stated that BM2 DUQUE was correct and she and ENS [REDACTED] switched their configuration with the assistance of the tenders. Then they entered the water, BM2 Duque first, followed by LT Hill, then ENS [REDACTED].

A few moments later, ENS [REDACTED] stated that her dry suit was leaking. ENS [REDACTED] with the assistance of MK1 [REDACTED] helped her out of the water, and she confirmed that her upper body was getting wet and cold. She talked to LT HILL who instructed her to see if she could find another dry suit, though she didn't think there were any working ones left. At this point ENS [REDACTED] helped ENS [REDACTED] back onto the ship.

On the way to the locker, ENS [REDACTED] and ENS [REDACTED] heard a pipe that ice liberty would end soon - 1845, and ENS [REDACTED] quickly realized there were no usable suits of her size. Thus, she elected not to dive and went back to her stateroom to change. ENS [REDACTED] headed back out to the ice.

On the ice, ENS [REDACTED] took pictures of the polar bear swim (scientists and crew members jumping into the water with bathing suits and underwear) and of the ice. A short while later he saw a group of people congregating at the dive side. He then realized that both remaining divers (LT HILL and BM2 DUQUE) were lying on the ice.

ENS [REDACTED] heard calls for stretcher bearers and for the dive manual. He went to the dive locker and retrieved the dive manual, which was in a white binder out on the table. He then returned to the ice.

Once back at the dive side he saw first aid and CPR being administered and knew that the dive profile would be important. Therefore, he immediately checked the dive gauges of both divers. He noted that BM2 DUQUE had maxed his depth gauge at over 200 feet, and that LT HILL had reached a depth of about 190. He called out the depths and told the medical personnel that the divers needed to be recompressed to 200 feet.


In response to several questions, ENS [REDACTED] stated the following. At the dive side there was no oxygen, no radio and no medical equipment bag. It was unclear who was in charge of the dive on the ice, but it seemed that no single person was running the operation. ENS [REDACTED] was not a trained or qualified Coast Guard diver or dive tender and he had not completed the dive tender PQS. ENS [REDACTED] does not recall anyone timing the dive from the ice. The on ice brief before the dive was professional, but a little lighthearted. There was no GAR model, or similar risk assessment taken. No

ENCLOSURE(7)

2
PAGE 2 OF 4 PAGES.

(b)(6)(7)(c)

senior members of the command cadre (CO, XO, EO, OPS) were present at the brief. There were no checklists present, or being utilized, at the brief or during the dive. There was no request by the science party to include diving as part of this phase of the deployment.

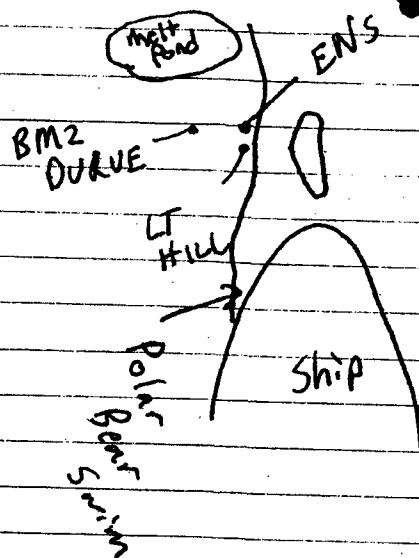


ENCLOSURE(90)

PAGE ³3 OF 4 PAGES.

(b)(6)§(7)(C)

Immeadiatly after dive brief



ENCLOSURE(90)

PAGE 4 OF 4 PAGES.

(b)(6) & (7)(c)